a miscellany of Fortean curiosites

THE NEWS

SPECIAL 'MONSTER' ISSUE!!!

'SURREY PUMA' and other mystery animals...3

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SUBSCRIBE - OR DIE!

The old death-rattle of IT has passed, like the Black Spot, to us. We need more subscribers or we die! Here are the facts: mid-75 we had a circulation of 200 plus - which dropped to about 140 at year-end. This was due to some (necessary) free issues, but mainly lapsed subscriptions that have not been renewed. Some of this may be a reaction to our regrettable but very necessary price-rise late last year, but I think this is more probably the effect of the depression. Either way it is a sad blow — thankfully, it's not too late to do something about it. We only need 200 people at the present rate - not many, considering the number of Forteans there must be.

Some people suggest we advertise more - I wish we could. Subscriptions are staggered over the year, so that not all the 140 plus have paid the £3/$6.60, and the kitty total fluctuates alarmingly - so that several times I've only had a few pounds left after paying for printing and postage, then over the inter-issue period enough subs come in for the next issue, and so on. It's not healthy - for me or the mag - but there's no money for ads. I have a plan — we must have a small fund of working capital to level out the valleys and peaks in revenue. Since there is no other way, and since the NEWS is also its readers (without whom it'd be vanity on my part) - I appeal to you, the readers and contributors who have supported us thus far, for donations towards a working fund. With that we can advertise more. With more readers, we can look toward better printing, more pages, and more reader services. For example: the binders we mention below - if we had the capital, we could go ahead immediately, but as we are, we have to wait until we can muster enough interested parties so we do not sustain a loss on the venture.

My future dreams for THE NEWS, apart from building it up to the consistent quality and standing of FSR, and the broad news and article coverage of, say, a New Scientist, is to get to the stage of a positive attack on Fortean events, funding projects and research, and with INFO, generate our own publishing of reference works. I'd also like to see us make use of the GPO Freepost scheme, issuing our readers with postpaid cards, so that keeping us informed of events is not so much of a direct burden on them. I'd also like to increase our scope of coverage by subscriptions to news-clipping agencies, and to the Centre for Short-lived Phenomena.

The alternative to failing to get more readers one way or another, is to alter our format. The way we are now is the lowest equitable balance between low-cost and the advantages of litho printing. Our small size is very economical (2 pages on one side of paper), but we pay the cost by being limited

...cont/ back page:

"It is not necessary that a gamekeeper should kill a luminous own, and so put an end to a mystery. A story that he did will serve just as well."
Charles Fort. The Books, p627.

The 'Surrey Puma' & Friends: More Mystery Animals.

by RJM Rickard.

THE SURREY PUMA - REVISITED.

The list below is comprised of reported sightings of 'Mystery Animals' (MAs) since, or not included in, the list I published in the INFO Journal 13 (1974) (pp3-18) which also reviewed some 'wild' correlations with the somewhat similar modus operandi of UFOs and ghosts. As I mentioned at the time, some information was gleaned from the file on the phenomenon at the Zoological Society of London (hereinafter ZSL), being mainly correspondence on the 62-64 flap, the 'Munstead Monster' and sightings mentioned by ZSL members, addressed to the Public Relations Officer, JA Dale, and his predecessor, Miss Joan Crammond. I'd like to express my sincere thanks here to Mr Dale for his patience with my questions over a couple of years, and his agreement to my quoting from a few items in this file (designated in the list below, ZSL). By some oversight, I omitted to credit the photo of the Munstead pawprint (INFO 13 p16) to the ZSL, and hope this rectifies that.

This present compilation of notes that have accumulated since then is intended to supplement and extend the INFO article - and if it seems I'm chucking you in the deep end, please bear with me (or better still buy a back copy of INFO Journal.)

IT'S RAINING FERAL CATS AND DOGS.

You'll find many references to tracks and hair being found, but nothing conclusive has been deduced from them so far. Even the famous Munstead Monster prints (case 8 & photos in INFO 13) succeeded in a public difference of opinion between Dr Maurice Burton (who thought they were bloodhound) and the ZSL who initially thought it to be puma. Later, the ZSL changed their mind - but even if Dr Burton was having doubts himself he never voiced them. In the face of conflicting evidence he grudgingly admitted to the Daily Telegraph, 28 Aug 66 that there were tracks and sightings not entirely explained by his theory. He said: "I would not rule out the possibility that there is something out of the ordinary in the area." If I may be permitted to be harsh for a moment this element of doubt is soon forgotten; this "something out of the ordinary" is ignored for the more provable theories and comfortable evidence of "feral cats and dogs" (see Dr Burton's statements to the Daily Telegraph, 23 Nov 66, and his writings listed in my INFO article). What is sadder, is that we all know this 'selective amnesia' (as JC Pearce would call it) is only too typical of the modern scientific orthodoxy. Thus the golden moments, when it seemed as though we (all of us) might be getting somewhere, slip away, and we are left as much, if not more, in the dark as we were - only this time with another muddle to confuse the already hopelessly confused issue. As an example of the rosy-glow time puts on our memories, we attach part of a letter to your editor from Dr Burton, dated 27 Oct 75. (I had asked Dr Burton if he was as confirmed in his opinion now as he was then. By reply he kindly summarized his position.)

"I was sceptical about the puma from the very start, despite Miss Gompertz' observation ((one of the conflicting evidences I referred to above; see also INFO 13 p9 col2 - Ed.)) and after a long investigation I think I settled the matter. To begin with, there was a large feral domestic cat, ginger in colour, that was highly aggressive, in the Farnham district. This gave rise to the stories of a mystery animal. Then came the discovery of the large pawmark on the Munstead track of which the police took a plastercast. This was pronounced 'puma' by the then Scientific Director of the London Zoo. It proved to be beyond doubt the pawmark of a large dog bloodhound although he had said 'puma'. All the eye-witness accounts that I was able to investigate at first-hand proved to be either otter, badger, fox, deer, or feral cats and dogs. Finally, two couples of police patrol officers reported an unusual animal near the Hog's Back Hotel ((on A31

between Farnham & Guildford - Ed.)) where the puma had been reported more frequently than anywhere else. After having had the opportunity to interrogate them, I came to the conclusion that we were dealing with a feral dog and within days of reaching this conclusion I learned that a greyhound had been feral in that area for two years and that it had an injured left paw which gave it a most unusual bouncing run, and that this animal had been shot on the order of the landowner because people were going onto his land allegedly to look for the puma, but probably also looking for his pheasants.

I wrote a long letter to the local news paper setting forth all my findings and after that the puma died a natural death except for occasional sporadic letters published in that paper's columns about a strange animal having been seen, each of which seemed beyond question to be merely a fox running across the road in the headlights of a car. During the two years that the hunt for the Surrey puma was on, there were reported throughout the southern half of England about a dozen large members of the Felidae, including lioness, cheetah and panther. All proved beyond doubt to be feral dogs or cats. There can be no doubt that the hysteria engendered by stories of a puma loose in the Surrey countryside spread well beyond the boundaries of that County and played on the imaginations of people far and wide.

(Signed) Dr Maurice Burton."

THE FORTEAN POSITION.

Clearly there is a division of opinion here and I'll declare where we Forteans stand. It should matter little to us whether there is a puma out there or not - since we accept that adherance to one theory at the expense of any other automatically conditions the sort of evidence you will find 'acceptible'. The point that interests us is that "there is something out of the ordinary in the area", to use Dr Burton's own words.

The Surrey Puma controversy is a microcosm of worldwide evidence for MAs of different kinds. The investigators of cases (eg Dr Burton & the ZSL) are clearly arguing on the basis of a 'real' puma being involved, and this has shown up anomalies in the evidence (as Dr Burton has several times written about) eg. the varieties of descriptions; the stories of 'puma' being seen in different places and it being 'impossible' to traverse the distance between in the time; the lack of depredations and other evidence, like carcases, lairs etc. These same problems of paradoxical evidence are met in nearly every area of investigation into the unknown, particularly UFOs and ghosts. They are generated by the limits of logic in extrapolating towards a complex phenomenon from single physical instances, even assuming this is done from rigorously established facts. On this level, we can applaud when a particular case proves to Dr Burton's satisfaction (and anybody else's) to have involved a feral dog, but to extend that judgment to all cases, ipso facto, is sheer folly. Our opinion here is based on the stories below (and INFO 13), most of which were close observations, and the details in some cases do not suggest feral cats or dogs at all. Another reason for our attitude is that (as noted in the list below) we simply do not know what is running around out there. Just in the data to hand, there is an escaped mountain-lion (case 77); at least 4 baboons in Worcs (case 71) and an unknown number of baboons in Co Durham (cases 74 & 75); a racoon in Yorkshire (case 80)...not to mention the sudden appearance of at least four wild boars (see INFO article) in Hampshire, and the wild wallaby colonies in Derbyshire and Kent. Analytically too, the morphology of evidence in (some) of the listed cases presents correspondences with MA sightings from all over the world.

Just how complex the MA problem is, we are perhaps just beginning to realise. If Jung can write of lights in the sky as symptoms of "long-lasting transformations of the collective psyche" (Flying Saucers, Introduction), it could be suggested on the basis of Jung's own theories of transformation symbolism that these "changes in the constellation of psychic dominants" extend to unconscious shamanistic experiences involving animal phantoms, especially shape-changing ones. This argument includes whatever it is that happens to people at Loch Ness. Further, we have the problem of whether the mind can influence our 'Reality', and Ted Holiday's article (this issue) goes into that to some degree.

Nor should we neglect to mention the continuity with ancient folk tradition and lore. Just as, for example, the medieval legends of phantom ships in the sky can be shown to be comparable and continuous with modern UFOs (see 'The Phantom Ship & The UFO' by Peter Rogerson, MUFOB, new series 1), so the MA phenomenon has its avatars; in our case, with 'Fairy Dog & Cats', the Black Dog, and other phantom beasts.

But lest we be hoist with the same petard, let us say that undoubtedly there have been cases of feral dogs and cats; and people mistaking badgers and otters for something else - but, by and large, the witnesses are those who live in the country, who have lived with country sounds and sights, and when they say it was not a fox, I'm inclined to believe them. Too often in the past, in this and other subjects (like meteorites), scientists have too easily dismissed evidence because the witnesses were only countryfolk, less educated than themselves, their sense of superiority blinding them to their duty to impartial scientific investigation. Hoaxers in this subject are extremely rare and usually readily apparent. Our data is mainly from reported firsthand experiences, and I think deserves to be considered seriously.

Supplementary list of Mystery Animal Phenomena in England. (Extension from INFO Journal 13.)

NB: These cases have been subnumbered for correct insertion into chronological sequence.

9.2	12 Sept 64.	Wyphurst, Hants?	Deer carcase devoured. (Mentioned in ZSL correspondence to Miss J Crammond, PRO. 1 Nov 66.)
12.	25 Sept 64.	Dunsfold, Surrey.	Add info: ginger-colour; 5-6ft long; 3ft high. Daily Mirror, 26 Sept 64.
12.2	25 Sept 65.	nr Godalming, Surrey.	Big cat seen crossing road during hunt for it. "but when the alarm was raised, police & zoo officials who were hunting it, were all at lunch." Daily Express, 26 Sept 64.
13.2	2 Oct 64.	? (Hants/Surrey.)	Animal seen leaping 10-12ft into undergrowth. (Source: as 9.2 above.)
13.3	Early Oct 64.	Robins Garth Kennels, West Sussex.	Lady walking dogs in woods, although couldn't see its head, was "In no doubt.." it was the "Puma". 6ft long; 3ft high; fawn gold colour. Dogs chased it into woods whence came "spitting & screeching sounds". Paw marks found near farm showing clear claw impressions. Midhurst & Petworth Observer, 13 Oct 64.
14.2	Late Oct 64.	Farley Mount, nr Winchester, Hants.	Police search following reports of wounded "puma". Gamekeeper shot at "black slit-eyed animal". (London) Evening News, 24 Oct 64.
14.3	Late Oct 64.	Kings Sumbourne, nr Winchester, Hants.	Gamekeeper saw "puma" twice.
		Crondall area, Hants/Surrey border.	"Puma" reported several times. (London) Evening News, 28 Oct 64.
23.2	4 Feb 65.	Woodlands, nr Southampton.	Woman phones paper, "Puma" is on her lawn.
		Newforest, (both in) Hants.	Girl in village (4 miles from above) says she has seen an animal resempling puma. (London) Evening Standard, 4 Feb 65.
28.2	4 May 66.	Newton Valance, Hants.	Lady write to ZSL of "strange animal" that left footprints. Correspondence to JA Dale, PRO ZSL, 4 May 66.
30.2	1 Sept 66.	Chiddingfold, Hants.	Lady farmer stopped Landrover ("for unknown reason") and walked through thistle patch - stepped on tail of "puma". It reared, attacking with both paws, scratching her cheek. She hit it with stick - it ran, climbed tree. She went for assistance, but it had gone during absence. A Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries official found no tracks, only some hair. Internal ZSL memo, 2 Sept 66.
40.2	? Dec 70.	Buckland Housing Estate, Dover, Kent.	7 reports of "puma" over 3 weeks. 4 sheep killed. "large animal believed to be a puma." (London) Evening Standard, 21 Dec 70. Cr:N Watson.
45.2	15 July 71.	Chiswell Green, nr St Albans, Herts.	2ft high grey cat-like (but bigger) animal seen at derelict Plaistow Farm by policeman who thought it was "puma". Search later-nothing-no escapes. (Herts) Evening Echo, 16 July 71; Herts Advertiser, 23 July 71. Cr: Janet Bord. NEWS 9/16.
45.3	Mid-July 71.	Nutley, Ashdown Forest, Sussex.	2 policemen saw puma-like animal; black & tan with streaks of yellow; pointed ears. It attacked a dog at Outback Farm. We wrote - but no reply to date. The Times, 23 July 71. Cr: Nigel Watson.

47.2	Mid-June 72.	Polegate to Folkington road, Sussex.	Large cat-like animal running at 35mph. Larger than cat. Seen week before jumping 5ft fence. (London) Evening News, 14 June 72. Cr: Janet Bord. NEWS 9/16.
48.2	? June 72. 3.30am.	Stone St (Roman road) between Lympne and Canterbury, Kent.	Large "definitely cat-like" animal ran in front of car. Broad, bushy, black-banded tail. Folkstone Herald, 27 Jan 73. Cr: L Coleman.
58.2	4 Jan 73.	Capel-le-Ferne to Alkham road, Kent.	7ft long; short brown hair; sleek & graceful; ran in front of car. Tracks found - pads, big as "man's hand." No reports of lambs killed. Folkstone Herald, 10 Jan 73. Cr: L Coleman.
58.3	Early Jan 73.	Sway, Hants.	Ref to "puma" seen. (Source: see 58.4 below.)
58.4	Late Jan 73	A35. Christchurch to Lyndhurst - by turning to Bank, Hants.	"Largest cat I've seen in my life"; "not a badger". Large, black, low-slung, cat-like body; longer than, but not high as, Labrador; short head. Ran in front of car - car hit tail. Southern Evening Echo, 29 Jan 73. Cr: Coleman.
59.2	Feb (73?).	Winsor, near Southampton, Hants.	Animal seen "larger than Alsatian." Deep claw marks in clay ditch. (Source: see 64 below.)
64	Late 73.(?)	Woodlands, near Southampton, Hants.	3 children & dog on Lower Bartley Rd see cat-like animal, larger than their Alsatian, creeping along in grass; big head; stick-up cat-like ears; fierce eyes; tawny brown. It bounded away at a noise. Boy later identifies 'Puma' from an animal book. Southern Evening Echo, late 73. Cr: L Coleman.
65	3 Nov 73.	Rake to Harting Combe road, Hants.	Large black cat-like animal; tufted fur on back; lighter flanks; long black tail; bigger than Alsatian. Ran in front of car. The (?) News, 5 Nov 73. Cr: Loren Coleman.
66	28 Nov 73.	Winchester by-pass, Hants.	Woman Pc saw "jaguar" cross in front of car. None missing from zoos. Southern Evening Echo, 28 Nov 73. Cr: Coleman.
67	Early 74.	Ayrshire.	Anonymous caller to RSPCA asks them to pull the teeth on his "growling cat". Nothing more known. NEWS 7/2. Sunday Mirror, 23 June 74. Cr: Robert Forrest.
68	7 April 74. 3.30am.	Junction of Western Ave. and Bury Rd, Boscombe, Bournemouth, Hants.	Big as a medium-sized dog; "half cat, half dog"; "not a fox". Thin striped body; long thin tail; grey with some yellow; ears set back like cat. Identified 'Tasmanian pouched wolf' from book. "loping" across road in car headlights. Bournemouth Evening Echo, 7 April 74. Cr: Mucha. NEWS 9/19-20.
69	? May 74. (over several weeks.	Delamere Forest, nr Kingsley; Hatchmere Lake; & Kingsley to Oakmere road, Cheshire.	Dog-like animal with a tail like a fox. "Certain it wasn't a fox". 2ft high. Runcorn Weekly News, 30 May 74. Cr: Peter Rogerson. NEWS 9/20.
70	14 June 74. (apx). 7am.	Barrmill to Beith road, North Ayrshire.	"like some kind of lion"; "not a dog"; bounded across road into fields. 2½-3ft high; heavy legs; large paws; long curled-up tail.
	12pm.		Second incident. Driver forced to stop few feet away from animal sitting in road, in full beam headlights. After 5mins, he attempts to drive around it; bumps it; it growls.
			Police search - nothing "unusual" found. No escapes from zoos. Conjectured that animal in case 67 (above) had been let loose. NEWS 7/2.

			Sunday Express, 16 June 74. Cr: P Rogerson. Big cat, believed to weigh "40lbs". Sunday Mirror, 23 June 74. Cr: R Forrest.
71	8 July 74.	Wyre Forest, Worcs/Shrops border.	80 baboons escape from West Midlands Safari Park. (Birmingham) Evening Mail, 13 July 74. NEWS 9/15.
72	9 July 74.	Kinson, Hants.	Wallaby caught in High St. The Sun, 10 July 74. NEWS 9/18.
73	13 July 74.	Wyre Forest, Worcs/Shrops border.	Case 71 cont. All but 4 baboons recaptured. (Source: see Case 71 above.)
74	12 Aug 74. (apx).	Chester-le-Street, Co Durham.	Unstated number of baboons escape from Lambton Safari Park. Some returned - some still loose. The Sun, 13 & 14 Aug 74. NEWS 9/15.
75	? Sept 74.	Chester-le-Street, Co Durham.	Another "mass escape" of baboons from Lambton Safari Park. Some recaptured - some still loose. Daily Mirror, 3 Sept. Cr: Forrest. NEWS 9/15.
76	? Oct 74.	Oldington Woods, Kidderminster, Worcs.	Case 71 cont. Baboons seen crossing road near sugar factory. Sunday Mercury, 27 Oct 74. NEWS 9/15.
77	1 Jan 75.	Byton, Herefordshire.	Mountain-lion escapes. Caught during search. Escapes again - still free. Daily Mirror, 2 Jan 75. NEWS 9/16-17.
78	4 Jan 75.	Colchester Zoo, Essex.	8 week-old panther cub vanishes from zoo. Presumed stolen.
	5 Jan 75.	East Peckham, Kent.	2ft long panther cub found by fisherman on banks of river Medway. NEWS 9/17. Daily Express, 7 Jan 75. Cr: Steev Moore. Weekly News, 18 Jan 75. Cr: Nigel Watson.
79	15 Jan 75.	Langham, Norfolk.	2 lion cubs seen romping on council rubbish tip. Council ratcatcher failed to find them. The Sun, 16 Jan 75. NEWS 9/17.
80	12 Feb 75.	Skipwith to Thurganby road, Skipwith Common, nr Riccal, Yorks.	Man sees "bear"; "I'm sure it was a bear." Not fully grown; brown/black footpads; apx 5ft high; big as Alsation on all fours; dark brown skin (sic). Police check on zoos - no bears missing. Ref. to 3 racoons escaping from Flamingo Park Zoo, near Pickering, Yorks - 2 recaptured; 1 still loose. Cr: JW Scaife. NEWS 9/16. Yorks. Evening Press, 13,14 & 17 Feb 75.
81	6 March 75.	Brooks Green, near Horsham, Sussex.	"Large cat-like animal" made two horses shy, throwing their girl riders. It crossed fields towards Barns Green. Also seen in area by man. Police search find tracks & hair on fence. RSPCA say "90-120lbs animal; no claw-marks, so not dog." Police say "First reliable evidence of its ('Puma's') existence." West Sussex County Times, 7 March 75. Cr:Start. The Sun, 7 March 75. Cr: Phil Ledger. NEWS 9/18.
82	9 March 75.	M23. Pease Pottage, Sussex.	Thought to be cont. of Case 81. "Puma" seen sitting by the motorway. NEWS 9/18. West Sussex County Times, 14 March 75. Cr:Start.

The NEWS reference refers to a fuller account published in our pages.

ADDITIONAL DATA - ATTACKS & ESCAPES.

We include some material in the above list which is not strictly "Surrey Puma" stuff, but which seems directly related to the question of MAs generally, at the time. For instance: the anonymous caller in case 67, seems related to the appearance a cat-like animal later that year (Case 70); 80 baboons escape in the Wyre Forest, the next day a wallaby turns up in Hampshire, and shortly after that there are two mass escapes of baboons in Co Durham

(Cases 71 - 76). One cannot help but dwell on whether synchronicity is involved in these events. Consider case 78: a panther cub 'vanishes' from a zoo - next day a fisherman 40 miles away finds a panther cub. It was claimed to be the same cub - but was it? Why would someone steal it (and how?) just to let loose in the wilds? (There's no accounting for the freaks of human endeavour!) Or again, during the bear-scare in Yorkshire (case 80) it becomes known that there is also a racoon on the loose in the area - please turn to NEWS 9/16, where the witness & searchers say they can positively distinguish between the two.

We have too much material to fit it all in here, but some issues this year will have more on attacks on animals, escapes, and attacks by animals. But having just mentioned a noticable element of synchronicity in some recent cases, I must mention that on 5 Nov 75 4 lions escaped from Robert's Circus at Gainsborough, Lincs. One of the lionesses mauled a 10-yr-old boy who died later. On the same day (and apparently about the same time) a park warden at Windsor Safari Park, Berks, was stalked and killed by a tiger. Details can be found in most national papers 6,7 & 21 Nov 75. Cr: Steev Moore, Robert Forrest.

Though many stories turn out to be of no great significance to us here, I must mention my favourite non-story in all this mish-mash. In May 1969, A Mr & Mrs Faulder of Purley, Surrey, phoned the police in terror, saying that a strange small monster with a white head was tapping at their door. PCs rushed to the scene and found the beast in some nearby bushes. It was a hedgehog with a yoghurt carton jammed over its head. Reveille, 19 Dec 70. Cr: Nigel Watson. Somehow it could be an object lesson to the human race.

The old "kill the mystery" gambit continues to be played for all its worthlessness. Harking back to the INFO listing: a feral tomcat was shot in Feb 66 (case 27) and the end of the 'mystery' was proclaimed. Same again when the strange bear-like prints (case 41, photos in INFO 13) were identified by Chessington Zoo as "seagull" prints. And again when, during a series of sightings by Fleet station (case 55), someone saw a Siamese cat in the area. To this we can add that at Avening, Gloucestershire, a stray cat which had attacked 9 children over a period was trapped and shot, in mid Sept75. Sunday Express, 21 Sept 75 Laughably, we have had no "puma" reports since then.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

In our reading we have come across three interesting stories of historical MAs that relate to our study.

THE WILD BEAST OF GEVAUDAN - 1764/5.

Something similar to the "Surrey Puma" scare occurred in the Languedoc area of France in the winter of 1764/5 - but a good deal more sinister. We have seen allusions to the case in various places, and thought it'd be nice to put the material on a more modern record - especially since it has definite affinities with the problems of reporting strange animals that we dwell on in this issue, and is an important case in its own right in the chronology of MA history.

The earliest account is found in the Paris Gazette, late 1764; that a strange beast had already devoured 20 persons, mainly young girls, in the region of Langagne and the forest of Mercoire, and terrified the woodcutters. It is described as "much higher than a wolf, low before, and his feet are armed with talons. His hair is reddish, his head large, and the muzzle of it is shaped like that of a greyhound; his ears are small and straight; his breast is wide and grey; his back streaked with black; his large mouth is provided with sharp teeth that have taken off several heads as clean as a razor." It attacked swiftly, crouching low, springing for the neck and throat. "He is afraid of oxen, which he runs away from."

The 'Wild Beast of Gevaudan' (as it came to be called), continued to elude many hunts for it. At Meude, a letter dated 21 Dec 1764 says, a detatchment of dragoons had been after it for 6 weeks; yet "The day before yesterday he devoured a little girl who looked after cattle." Not surprisingly, the province offered a bounty of 1000 crowns.

On 12 Jan 1765, it attacked seven children near Montpellier. A letter (presumably to the Paris Gazette) said: "The beast flew at one of the boys; but the three eldest, by beating him with stakes, the ends of which were iron, obliged him to retire, after having bitten off part of the boy's cheek, which he ate before them. He then seized another child; but they pursued him to a marsh close by, where he sank up to his belly. By continually beating him they rescued their companion. A man at last coming up, put the creature to flight. He afterwards devoured a boy at Mazel, and on the 21st ((Jan - the letter is dated 8 Feb.)) flew on a girl, who, however, escaped with dangerous wounds. The next day he attacked a woman and bit off her head. Captain Duhamel of the dragoons has caused several of his men to dress in women's apparel and to accompany the children that keep the cattle." Louis XV, on hearing of the boys beating off the beast awarded them 700 livres.

In England these reports were treated with no less incredulity than elsewhere in Europe. Lloyds Evening Post quoting from Dutch papers said: "The accounts of the wild beast of the Gevaudan are of such a nature that it is hardly possible to give any credit thereto, and

Cont on p17///

We had scheduled for this issue an article by Ted Holiday on the Rines' photos - he was up at the Loch when the photos were taken - but a hasty note asked us to hold it back because something quite important had happened that related to his theories of The Great Orm of Ness and other lochs. We'll bring you news as it unfolds - meanwhile we present Mr Holiday's reply to Robert Forrest's article, 'Leys, UFOs & Chance' in the last issue.

Leys and those Whatsits.

by FW Holiday.

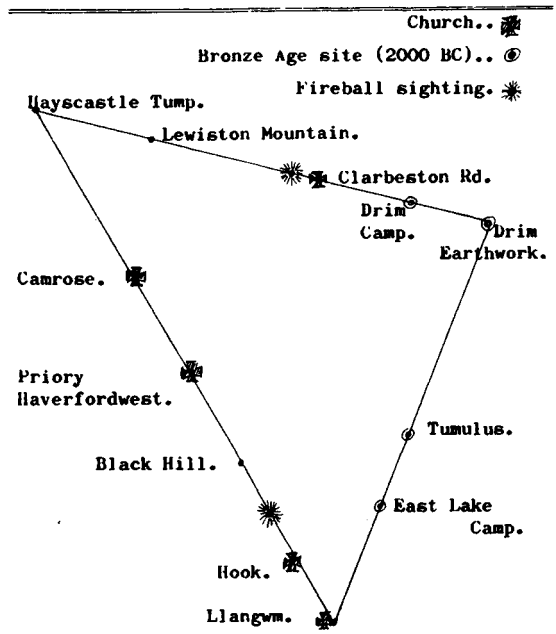
I see that Robert Forrest has put his critique of leys, UFOs and the chance factor into print in your journal. My own approach is pragmatic rather than theoretical.

In 1966 I had a splendid view of a UFO at a range of about half a mile through 10x50 binoculars. The oval object looked like a beautiful golden easter-egg which I judged was about 25 feet long on its axis. It was cruising through the night sky almost level with my position on a hillside over a landscape I knew well. It was moving about the speed of a fast car on a road. It seemed to be translucent and was lit from within. There were no visible features such as wings, windows or engines; it was soundless.

At that time I doubt if I had even heard of ley-lines. It was only when I started plotting the lines connecting megalithic sites in South Wales that I noticed the object had in fact been travelling up a line 24 miles long connecting the following:

* a tumulus near Pendine (the origin);
* summit of a 600ft hill;
* site of ancient church at Church Farm;
* Whitland Abbey ruins;
* tumulus at Cross Hands;
* Hebron Church;
* hill-top cairn on Foel Dyrch;
* cairn on Crugiau Dwy;
* Crug-yr-Hwch burial chamber;
* ancient church at Plas Lawrence; and the
* ancient burial chambers at Pant-Y-Groes (terminates).

Early last year, two UFOs were reported close to the ground near Haverfordwest on dates a week apart.((see NEWS 9/11-12 - Ed.)) Together with a friend - Randall Jones-Pugh, MRCVS - who reports these sightings to BUFORA, we interviewed the witnesses. I also took maps. One sighting was of a strange light which descended into a wood: the other was of a smallish oval object hovering at ground level, much to the fright of two witnesses who encountered it on a tractor, when it at once flew away. These objects came down on or very near the lines of the ley triangulation shown in this diagram.



One swallow (or even three) doesn't make a summer, nor do these three observations prove a theory. When monks found that wounds often healed when you slapped a slice of cheese on them, that proved nothing much either. It was some 400 years before we found that this does work and why. Today we call it penecillin. I think that UFOs and leys are like a slice of cheese.

In my opinion ley-lines stand or fall in correlation with megalithic artefacts such as tumuli, cromlechs, together with religious buildings which were often built on these sites. We should remember, however, that many sites have been almost completely obliterated, such as the megalithic village which existed on the Prescelly Hills near where the Stonehenge bluestones were collected. This village can be clearly seen from the air using infrared photography. Few archeologists have even heard about this site.

In correspondence, Mr Forrest queried my insistence that a megalithic ley-line triangulation I had given him was in fact in the proportions 8:15:17. Professor Thom, however, says that megalithic man knew at least three Pythagorean triangles, including the largest, 12:35:17.

Mr Forrest asked me if this example was integral in megalithic yards. Since we are dealing with a triangle with a hypotenuse of some 11 & 5/16 miles, and a base of some 7 & 15/16 miles, such precise measurements are not known. Ordinary surveying is accurate to about 1:1000. To obtain an accuracy of 1:100,000 you would need ground markers, a helicopter and two lasers.

There are three options with leys. You can argue that they do not exist - in which case the critics have an awful lot of aligned tumuli to get rid of. You can argue that the lines are a product of prehistoric surveying for purposes unknown. Or you can take the attitude that the lines are places where some sort of linear force exists which can be detected by dowsing. I take the latter view - and my dowsing rods agree.

Mr Forrest is a professional mathematician whereas my humble talent sank without trace in the bogs of calculus, so I cannot comment on his diagram. I simply have a gut reaction that leys and the flying whatsits are just a big slice of smelly Roquefort ((Nice to see you fitting Fort in somehow - Ed.)) waiting for a latterday Fleming to come along and slap a label on them. But, as with cheese, the time may not be ripe.

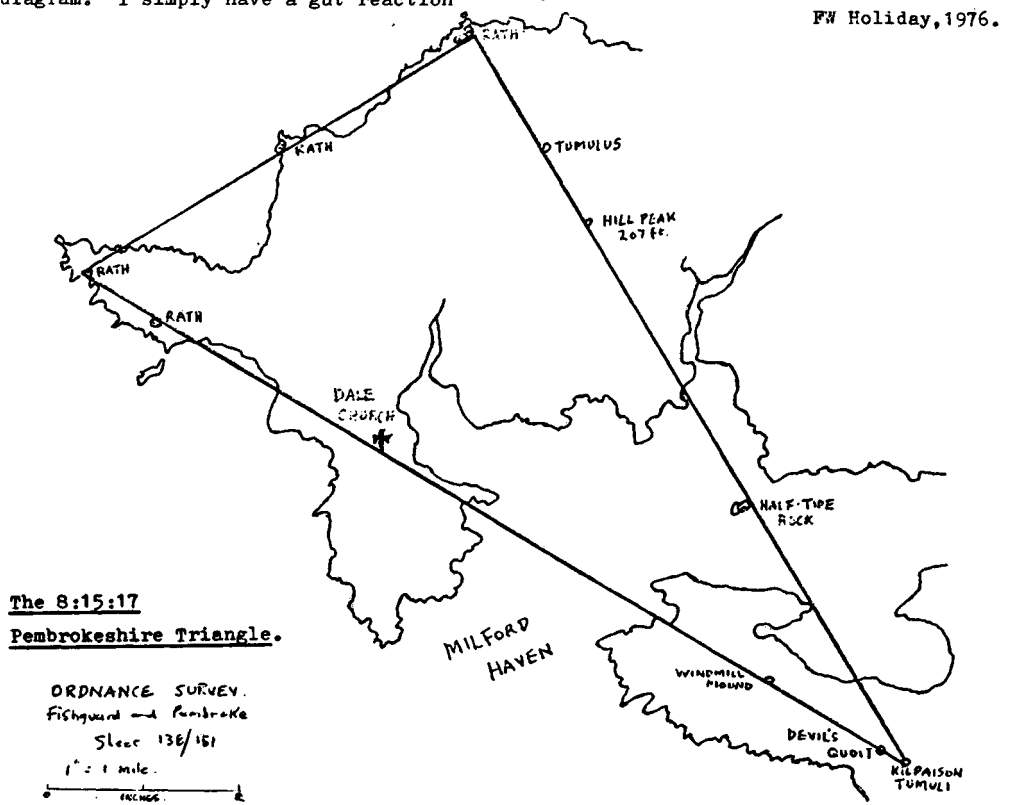
Some very good mathematical minds have applied themselves to the UFO-ley-line mystery and Mr Forrest is in the good company of Aimé Michel and Jaques Vallée in failing to discover a meaningful pattern. It is nobody's fault. There is almost certainly a paranormal block in action over this, just as there is in most psychical research. The ancients certainly believed this when they wrote in Ecclesiasticus:

> "For at the first she will walk with him by crooked ways, and bring fear and dread upon him, and torment him with her discipline until she may trust his soul, and try him by her laws. Then she will return the straight way unto him and comfort him, and show him her secrets."

The brilliant psychologist Sir Cyril Burt believed there are such blocks and so does Dr Lyall Watson. So do I.

I suggest that Mr Forrest explains the meaning of the 8:15:17 Pembrokeshire triangle instead of arguing why UFOs would not appear on it.

FW Holiday, 1976.



The 8:15:17
Pembrokeshire Triangle.

"Then the Emperor walked along in the procession under the gorgeous canopy, and everybody in the streets and at the windows exclaimed: "How beautiful the Emperor's new clothes are!"...Nobody would let it appear that he could see nothing, for then he would not be fit for his post, or else he was a fool." Hans Christian Anderson.

The Emperor's New Monster

by RJM Rickard.

I have before me a vast heap of clippings on the recent Nessie business. For a subject that annually attracts the ridicule of the mass-media, the reporters certainly got some milage out of their pencils this time. We'll ignore most of the pap and concentrate on the central issues as they were reported, and leave the rest to the next issue, including a salutory assemblage of all the different versions of what plesiosaurs are supposed to look like.

The much-heralded meeting at which all would be revealed, to be held in Edinburgh on 9 Dec, under the aegis of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, and the Universities of Heriot-Watt, and Edinburgh, was cancelled 8 days in advance, because, it was said, the principal parties had all stated their positions in public, and loudly, and that "useful or impartial discussion would no longer be possible." (1). Tim Dinsdale was reported as saying: "It's like the calm of a battlefield before the crunch. A few star shells have gone up showing where everybody is. Soon the gunfire will start." (2). Yes folks! It's the Science-in-Action show!

Nevertheless, Sir Peter Scott and Dr Robert Rines went ahead with their public unveiling, timing a press-conference held in the House of Commons on the 10th Dec, with the publication next day of their article in Nature, to be shortly followed by Nicholas Witchell's history of the phenomenon and the Loch Ness Investigation Bureau, The Loch Ness Story, in paperback by Penguin.

THE PHOTOS.

The photographic evidence was shown to a number of experts all over the world, who, as Dr John Sheals, keeper of zoology at the British Museum, said, were sworn by "a solemn vow of secrecy." (3). Surprisingly, it seems Rines was the first to break this pledge, as various newspapers reported on the 5th Dec, by flashing the pictures at a law school lecture at Concord, New Hampshire.

I wasn't at the Commons press-conference, I hazard a guess there were no gasps of surprise when the photos were unveiled - more probably the creak of straining neck-muscles, and the whirr of mentally riffing through repertoires of glib questions and pat comments.

The presentation and press exposure has been geared to notions of a 'monster' in Loch Ness, something the British Museum team, dubbed the 'Kensington Five' by the Observer (4), could not agree with. It may seem to Rines et al the the Five were being deliberately pig-headed in ignoring their "convincing" proof, but hair-splitting, especially in Taxonomy (the naming and identification of things), is their daily business.

A 4-page document was handed out at the Commons conference, setting out the endorsements of the experts who had examined the photos, including Alan Gillespie of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Caltech, in charge of the image enhancement process used for clarifying images on foggy film, who wrote: "One picture showed a body with a long neck and two stubby appendages..The second frame appeared to show a neck and head, with the head closer to the camera than the body..The neck was reticulated. The head supported projections..I see no evidence that they are pictures of a model, toy..or whatever. I emphasize: I detect no evidence of fraud. These objects are not patterns of algae, sediment or gas bubbles." (5). The other 7 endorsees were also at pains to point out Rine's earlier (1972) photograph which appeared to show a flipper-like appendage, and concurred that the current photos show an object "most reasonably interpreted as the upper third of the body of an animal.." in the words of Prof Roy Mackal, Chicago University. (5). Dr Zug, curator of reptiles & amphibians at the Smithsonian, was more specific: "I believe these data indicate the presence of large animals in Loch Ness, but are insufficient to identify them." (5)

Sir Frank Claringbull, Director of the British Museum, said to the press: "Five of our experts have seen the pictures of the so-called monster and they don't believe it's an animal. It's a piece of tree." (6). This must have had Rines groaning aloud - but the actual statement issued by the Kensington Five makes

THE NESSIE PHOTOS taken on 20 June 75 by Dr Rines and his team consist of two significant images, found after computer-enhancement of six frames selected from the 2000 actually taken. D) is designated the 'head' shot. Witchell, writing in the Scottish Sunday Mail, 23 Nov 75, visualised a "hideous, angular, bony and revolting" face, with a prominent bony ridge running down the face into a thick, hard-looking upper lip, below two nostrils. There were "two tubes or stalks protruding from the top of its head," and its skin was "rough and mottled" and coloured "red-brown". E) is a visualisation by Daily Mirror artist Terry Dickie, 11 Dec. A) the photo claimed by a string of experts to show a body, long neck and head, taken by the Edgerton equipment at 35ft down in 80ft of water. Nature (1) says the body is 20-25ft from the camera, which is pointing 30° up from horizontal. The head & neck are estimated to be 7-12ft in length. The adjacent frames (1 min before and after) show nothing. B) how the Daily Mail artist Kevin Crowley interpreted it, and C) the Daily Mirror's version, (both of 11 Dec). Note one shows the back & the other a side view. Sir Peter Scott (S) said he thought it was a front view. The result, says

the Mail, is remarkably like a plesiosaur, "last seen around the earth some 40 million years ago." Oh yeah? By whom ....?

no reference to a tree. They are "entirely satisfied with the integrity and sincerity of the investigating team and the authenticity of the photographs," but the photos did not constitute "acceptable evidence of the existence of a large living animal."(7). My underlining is to emphasize that the BM did not suggest the photos were a hoax. But this is where the hairsplitting begins -- Rines & Scott say the two photos, plus the flipper ones of 72 and the verified sonar traces, all suggest a large living creature, even a family of them, in the Loch. The detractors say Rines has not proved they are photos of (even) the same animal, and that, when considered individually, were wholly inconclusive, and to conjecture a family of monsters from apparently unconnected evidence is verging on fantasy. To be fair, the sonar records are synchronous with the 72 photos. And despite the fact that the JPL expert in charge of image-enhancement, Alan Gillespie, spoke of control experiments, Rines could not satisfy the BM that test photos were taken in situ to judge visibility, resolution, perspective, etc, in the peaty murk of the Loch. Drifting trees were suggested, and I have no record of Rines refuting that either. But Gillespie said he was quite happy that there was a solid body in the water suggestive of a large animal.

THE EVIDENCE.

The photos, then, show up something, with insufficient clues to it being a tree or a monster, or to link it to the flipper-photos. It is suggestive - but so is a Rorschach blot. Technically I think the BM is right in this detail, but to say that only bones or a carcase will convince them immediately assumes the physicality of the monster phenomenon, and they become as guilty as Rines of prejudging the issue. Such unproductiveness is the result of a slavish automatic application of an inflexible scientific procedure. There is nothing wrong with the 'scientific method' per se - like everything else it responds best to intelligent application. Fort was writing the scenarios for these types of confrontation nearly 50 years ago. Deliberately or not, there are also historic processes at work. The BM and other establishment detractors have negated or discredited single pieces of evidence every time they arise, often in an unjust and bigoted way. But the evidence has, nevertheless, accumulated - but instead of examining the total case anew, they adopt an ancient position atop their heap of precedents. By God! gentlemen, you're capable of better than that! The trouble is that such a re-examination would take time and money, and an untrammelled spirit of inquiry - and in this era of 9-to-5 scientists, governments watching their money, and establishments their vaunted reputations, the odds on all three elements coming together grow daily more improbable.

In an article in Field, a few months before this storm broke, David James MP spoke hotly of zoologists being impervious to the accumulated evidence, the

difficulties of fraud as gadgetry gets more complex, and of the arrogant writing-off of all the solid eye-witness accounts.(8).

Dr Maurice Burton, whom we have met earlier in these pages, adopts the same technique with Nessie as he does with the MAs in the south of England. In 1961, he wrote: "My final conclusion is that the phenomenon known as the Loch Ness Monster is a mixture of gas filled vegetable mats, turbulences caused by gas escaping from faults in the bed of the Loch, commonplace objects including boats and birds seen at a distance and sometimes distorted by mirage effects, waves due to convection currents and to winds, slicks, windrows, otters and deer, and doubtless other things besides."(20).

Pomposity and obstinacy among scientists is as hard to budge as that of sheer crankery - not because of any inherant virtue, but because of the cumulation over decades of refusing to look dispassionately, so that prejudice snowballs - and refutation becomes a task that involves volumes of historical material, which in turn scares each side off. It was left to the able TC Lethbridge to call Dr Burton's bluff: "I do not believe that Highlanders could have been deceived by the explanations he suggests. It is altogether too much to expect one to believe that a Grant of Invermoriston, beside the loch, could be mistaken by a mat of rotting vegetation, a swimming deer, or a string of bubbles, into thinking that he was witnessing some very unusual occurrence. (Many of the observers) were obviously not the kind of people who could make the astonishing mistakes in observation ascribed to them."(9).

A rather jocular piece of sniping using some of Dr Burton's type of 'explanations', by New Scientist, before the photos were published, failed to come off, when they published a letter from Peter (In Search of Lake Monsters) Costello pointing out all their inaccuracies. For example, NS alleged that "one of the most famous" of the Nessie photos had been printed upside down "ever since it was first published in 1934." Costello answers: "It is nonsense to suggest that the Wilson photo of a long neck has been printed upside down since 1934. True, the Hugh Grey 1933 photo was once printed upside down by an Oslo paper in 1933 - but nowhere else." (21).

As a track record, the establishment can only point to a string of feeble attempts at discrediting. We have to agree with Lethbridge that, "we seem to find that the zoologists have not made out an acceptable case against the monsters. They must do far better if they are to refute the observations of a great number of intelligent people. Here and there they are probably right and can account for some of the things that have been observed. As a whole, however, they have not produced a good explanation."(9).

Just to drive the point home, Holiday, in his Dragon and the Disc, mentions a BBC TV debate on this subject, in late July 1968, with himself and Prof Mackal for, and Dr Burton against, with 30 members of the Law Society as jury. "The opposition..mustered the same stale arguments I had heard so often before. None of these critics had done a field-study, checked the many witnesses, or tried to see the phenomena for themselves. They merely presented an unscientific chunk of indigestible prejudice. The Law Society took note of this and we won our case." (10).

Paul Willis, President of INPO, quoted an apt passage from a story by Arthur Machen in his letter to the Washington Star, 12 Dec 75: "'The paleontologist might see monstrous, significant marks in the slime of a river bank, but he would never draw the conclusions that his own peculiar science would seem to suggest to him: he would choose any explanation rather than the obvious, since the obvious would also be the outrageous - according to our established habit of thought, which we deem final.'"

Thus an exasperated Rines was heard to moan: "Jeeeesus...why do they all keep talking about a goddam object? Why don't they call it an animal?"(4). He has our sympathy.

I have heard of references to people's theories that Rines was hoaxed by a third party, but I haven't the sources - besides it gets incredibly complicated and too far fetched. A monster-hunter called Roy Muir suggests the evidence might be caused by a fake Nessie lost in the 1960's during the making of a film (16). Somebody else had already suggested the shifting hulk of a real Viking ship, way back in June (18). Even the British Society of Underwater Photographers jumped in with the proposal that Rines' photos were of a decomposing cow's head, overdeveloped by 30% and enlarged 100 times. (19). This contradicts much of the technical info given by Rines et al, and virtually accuses him of complicity in a hoax, because Geoff Harwood, chairman of this society and author of the letter, suggests the film was overdeveloped to increase film speed. Dr G Corbet, another of the Kensington Five, deputy keeper of zoology, is quoted in one paper as suggesting that because there was no evidence of a hoax, and no evidence that rules out a hoax, it would have been easy for a third party to "drop something in the loch and tow it in front of the camera." Why, I wonder, do solid scientists go overboard in conjuring up elaborate hoaxes (they would have had to have secrecy, the equipment, the time, the knowledge of where the cameras were, etc) - would it not be simpler to believe that the camera merely took a picture of something? The British Museum still lives in trembling memory of the Piltdown hoax, so everything tends to be damned in the same swipe.

I am, myself, in considerable doubt about the physicality of any denizen in Loch Ness.

The question is complex, otherwise it would have been settled quickly, easily and definitively by now. I see it relating closely to the questions of the physicality of UFOs and Mystery Animal phenomena (see back to our opening pages), in that the significant factor in common is that paradoxical evidence has been accumulating for centuries. As Lethbridge concludes: "..I believe the observation must be right. If there are no real animals in the lochs, then the observers were seeing ghosts."(9).

THE PROBLEM.

Once physicality is debated, without reference to the vast accumulation of human experience, the paradoxes creep in. In retrospect, it is impossible to say who first began to interpret the Loch Ness Monster (LNM) as a plesiosaur, but, doubtless to much paleontological disgust, this is what the newspapers did.

Having marshalled the experts who saw in the photos something of an animal, the next question for Rines & Scott is, what is it, and how did it get there? We don't have the space to argue the various hypothetical beasts proposed over the years, in answer to the first question - you'll find endless pros and cons in the literature. In the immediate instance, we find drawings of plesiosaurs beginning to crop up in the media about 22 & 23 Nov. Sir Peter Scott & Rines say nothing about identifying the 'animal' in their Nature article (1), but in the press blurb, Sir Peter says the body, neck, head photo "recalls the shape of certain fossil specimens from pre-history." (5). Not explicit; but to the press, who are child-like in these matters, virtually an admission of 'plesiosaur'.

David James (Scott's colleague from the Loch Ness Investigation Bureau, which, incidentally is not mentioned to be defunct in the Commons handout, or even re-formed) in his Field article, suggested the old tectonic-movement-in-the-last-ice-age theory, which says that during the end of the ice-age, about 8-12000 years ago, the land rose up..."Had, therefore, any hypothetical species been present in force at the headwaters, they would have been cut off overnight, and if large, shy and living deep, with no natural enemies, it would have been a matter of surprise if they had died out." (8). I'd hardly call 8-12000 years 'overnight' - however, when the press took the idea up they published an amusing range of dates for this land-locking: from "3000"(11) to "5000 to 7000"(12) years ago.

Most authorities obviously thought the idea of plesiosaurs in the Loch too contemptible to refute - but Dr Beverly Halstead, reader in zoology and geology at Reading University, did expand on the subject, and as the author of The Evolution and Ecology of the Dinosaurs, he, if anyone in the business, ought to be well acquainted with the problem.(17) Plesiosaurs survived right through the Mesozoic era to vanish suddenly like most of the other dinosaurs at the beginning of the Tertiary period, about 60-70 million years ago. If there are plesiosaurs or any of their descendants in the Loch, where had they been hiding between then and the time the land rose at the Great Glen (say, just under 69 million years)? QED.

The other paradoxes are more subtle - if not a plesiosaur then, but a plesiosaur-like animal, what does it live on, how has it bred since the land-locking period to the present (say, 12000 years at the most)? Adrian Desmond, of Harvard and author of a recent book claiming that the dinosaurs were in fact hot-blooded creatures, wrote a critical article in the Times asking "How can one describe a beast that leaves no dead to be described? Why do corpses never rise to the surface, as they do in other animals? (If there is a viable breeding population) why do we not see one on the surface gulping air every few minutes? Why do we not encounter them at sea?" and ends with a statement that must have Machen laughing his socks off, wherever he is: "As a paleontologist I need bones, something to grapple with; not sonar traces."(3) God help us all!

I think these points are sufficiently answered by Sir Peter Scott (14) and Sir Robert McEwen (15) considering the physicality question to be in doubt anyway. They point out many reptiles that can stay underwater for long periods; that corpses stay down if they are below a certain depth; that the animals may even be cannibals. Sir Robert mentions the caverns under the sides of the loch; and Sir Peter the notion of gastroliths (stones eaten, even by dinosaurs, to aid in digestion). Both mention a number of animals that have survived with astonishingly low populations. Perhaps the most puzzling feature is, as Desmond acknowledges, that the bio-mass of the loch can support (theoretically) 17tons worth of 'monsters', (David James suggests 300 30ft carnivores (8), and Rines & Scott speak obliquely of a "population of large animals"(1)), If so, then why haven't the fishery authorities responsible for that area, who keep a track of the salmon migrations and other fishes, been able to report depredation on such a significant scale? This smacks too much of the argument (Dr Burton and others) for there being no 'Surrey Puma'; no lairs, no corpses, no significant depredation of flocks or heards, etc, not even the expected remains of kills in the wilds. Some investigators clearly cannot see past the appelations of 'Puma' or 'Monster', which began as a convenient handle and have ended up hamstringing the research - even the pro-monster school, as I have tried to suggest, are preconceiving the results in this way.

HANDLE - WITH CARE!

The main reasoning in Rines & Scott's

splash in Nature concerned giving Nessie the scientific name of Nessiteras rhombopteryx.(1). They had to do this from conservationist principles, they said; and from photographic evidence, because any hunt for a live specimen might considerably endanger the survival of their small community. Under Schedule 1 of an Act of Parliament passed last year for the conservation of wild beasts and plants, the LNM would require a scientific name before it would qualify, "even though the creature's relationship with known species, and even the taxonomic class to which it belongs, remain in doubt.". (1). Naturally, this upset the British Museum who take many years over the intricacies of naming new species, and, as Pearson Phillips wrote: "When they see amateurs inventing new animals after a few summers spent dipping cameras into water, they get upset." (4). This is facile, I know - Dr H Greenwood, one of the Kensington Five, senior principal scientific officer of the Fish Section of the BM) said: "My conclusion (from spending 7hrs with Rines & Scott) is that they have no proof at all of the existence of any unidentified creature. They have not identified a new species and I do not believe they have the right to coin a new name."(7). Rines and Scott quote as precedents the naming of sea-serpents by Rafinesque (1817), Oudemans (1892) and Heuvelmans (1958). Desmond, after referring to the naming battles between the paleontologists Cope & Marsh during the American wars againsts the Indians, writes sarcastically of this current fuss: "Paleontologists are now restrained by law from taking potshots at one another from rival quarries, but near riots still ensue from heated debates over the correct naming of a thimbleful of miniscule teeth attributable to mammals thriving 200 million years ago."(13).

But this naming has backfired on Rines & Scott in a most unexpected way, much to the amusement of everybody else. On the 13th (of all days) Dec. most national papers gleefully pointed out that their scientific name for the LNM is in fact an anagram of Monster Hoax by Sir Peter S. Sir Peter had coined the name with a friend, a Dumfriesshire schoolteacher, Alan Wilkins, who was stunned by this "amazing coincidence." To us Forteans, who are more interested in the wider implications of all mysterious phenomena, this has been a development our own studies ought to have lead us to expect, and to my mind confirms that we are witnessing something more fundamental being played out than rather superficial questions of whether there be plesiosaurs in Loch Ness. Oh! that Jung and Fort could see this - perhaps they have, and both are thumping the table in some celestial tavern, helpless with mirth. Perhaps the gales that swept Britain and Europe at the beginning of January was the laughter of the heavens themselves. All-in-all a classic of synchronicity!

Robert JM Rickard -- Jan 1976.

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My thanks go to Steev Moore, and especially to Ken Rogers, who collected most of the bulging file on Nessie 75 between them; and again to Ken for sending me all the stuff from the House of Commons conference.

* * * * * * * * *

"But there are no such things as waterbabies."

"How do you know that? Have you been there to see? And if you had been there to see, and had seen none, that would not prove there were none -- no one has a right to say that no waterbabies exist, till they have seen no waterbabies existing, which is quite a different thing from not seeing waterbabies." CHARLES KINGSLEY.

'Gevaudan' cont...

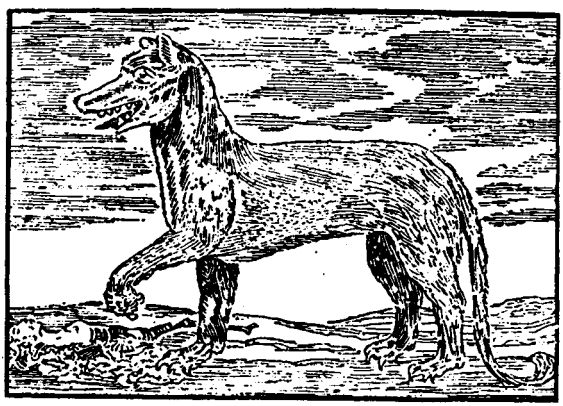
yet most of them have appeared in the Paris Gazette, a paper whose authors, known to be men of letters, are too judicious to be suspected of credulity..." etc.

The St James's Chronicle, 6 June 1765 gave a woodcut (see illo), thought to be based on a discription sent, in April 1765, to the Intendant of Alençon. It accompanied a summary of the story which ran thus:

> "For the *St. James's Chronicle.*
> "Of this beast, which has already devoured upwards of seventy Persons and spread Terrour and Desolation throughout the whole Gévaudan, the Sieur de la Chaumette, who lately wounded it, has given us the following Description. It is larger than a Calf of a year old, strongly made before, and turned like a Greyhound behind. His Nose is long and pointed, his Ears upright and smaller than a wolf's, his Mouth of a most enormous size, and always wide open; a Streak of Black runs from his Shoulders to the Beginning of his Tail. His Paws are very large and strong; the Hair on his Back and Mane thick, bristly, and erect; his Tail long and terminating in a Bush, like that of a Lion; his Eyes small, fierce, and fiery. From this description it appears that he is neither a Wolf, Tiger, nor Hyena, but probably a Mongrel, generated between the two last, and forming, as it were, a new Species. All the accounts lately received agree in assuring that there are several of them."

On 20 Sept 1765 the beast had the great misfortune to run into a Monsieur Beautermé, a gentleman hunter, in a wood at Pommieres. Intrigued by the stories, he thought to test his skills by tracking it down. He shot it in the eye, but it still had the fury to rush at him, and was finished off by a gamekeeper named Reinhard. Later, several people who had survived its attacks identified it. Beautermé accompanied the carcase to Versailles to present it to Louis.

A court surgeon dissected it. It was 32ins high; 5ft 7½ins long , inc. tail. The surgeon said the animal was more like a hyena than a wolf; its teeth being 40 against a wolf's 26 ((it says here. Can anyone confirm this? - Ed.)) It had strong neck muscles; a large, broad, thick tail that bristled with black hair; feet with strong claws; and "its eyes sparkled so with fire that it was hardly possible to bear its look." It was thought in Paris that it was a cross between a tiger and a lioness, and brought to France to be shown as a curiosity.



STRANGE WILD BEAST SEEN IN FRANCE.
From the "St. James's Chronicle," 1765.

The author of 'A Sketch of the Rise and Progress of Pictorial Journalism' in the Illustrated London News, 14 June 1879, from which I have all these facts, adds his opinion that it was, in all probability, a hyena that escaped from a travelling show, distorted into a horrific beast by the terrors of the people.

SOUTHAMPTON 'WOLF' SCARE - 1876.

As evidence of the opinion just mentioned above the author (simply referred to as "MJ") goes on to illustrate with the following story from Jan 1876, of:

"Captain Sir Allen Young's pet Esquimaux dog, which was either stolen or wandered from the Arctic ship 'Pandora' as she lay in Southampton harbour after returning from the polar regions. Quite a panic arose in that part of Hampshire where this most valuable and harmless animal was wandering about, and every sort of story was circulated of the ravages and dangers the country was subject to. The people began to think their sheep, pigs and children were in danger. Some said it was a gigantic black fox, others that it was a Canadian wolf. Expeditions were organised to attack it, and after being chased for some miles by people on horseback, it was ultimately shot and exhibited at sixpence a head in Winchester market-place. There could be no doubt about the dog's identity, for Sir Allen Young afterwards got back his skin." Illustrated London News, 14 June 1879, p566.

MAs IN ASIA MINOR - 8th CENTURY.

Returning to the theme of historical MAs, we remember a passage in Strange Mysteries of Time and Space by Harold T Wilkins (Ace, NY, 1958), one of the better post-Fort writers. On pp194/5, he quotes from the Chronicon of Denys de Tell-Mahre, who was born in Mesopotamia (now Iraq) near the end of the 8th C.

"Before the reign of the (Byzantine-Greek) Emperor Leo IV (ie prior to 774 AD), there raged a plague, followed by the appearance of a frightening and terrible animal who feared nothing and no man. They fled from no man, and indeed, killed many. Very little they were like wolves, but their muzzle was small and long, and they had great ears like those of horses. The skin on their dorsal spine resembled the bristles of pigs, and stuck straight up. These mysterious animals committed great ravages to the people in the Abdin Rock region, near Hoh. In certain villages, they devoured more than 100 people, and in many others from 20 and 40 to 50. Nothing could be done against them for they were fearless of man. If, by chance, men pursued them, in no wise did the monsters become scared or flee, but turned on the men. If men loosed their weapons on a monster, it leapt on the men and tore them in pieces. These monsters entered houses and yards and seized and carried off children. They climbed in the

cont on back page///

NOTES ON GREENWICH PHENOMENA

Part 1 of a Fortean interpretation of Taoist phenomenology by Steev Moore.

This collection of data is preparatory to a couple of articles (which will be published in subsequent issues of the NEWS) attempting a tentative interpretation of various Fortean phenomena in terms of Chinese Taoist and Yin-Yang philosophies. As certain features of the physical landscape are relevant to this interpretation, I intend to concentrate on an area of South East London well known to me, as a 'laboratory'. So, before coming to the main theories, a summary of phenomena in the Greenwich area is presented.

The area under consideration is small, perhaps too small, but this factor is out-weighed by the easy availability of information, and personal local knowledge. It is aproximately 4¼ miles by 3¼; bounded on the west by the River Ravensbourne, north by the Thames, east by the Kent border, and on the south by a rather arbitrary line 3¼ miles south of the Thames. Further geographical considerations will be discussed in the subsequent articles.

THE SHOOTERS HILL 'CHEETAH'.

(The following material is drawn from Kentish Mercury, 19 & 26 July, 1963. See also Kentish Independent, same dates)

1. 1 am, 18th July, 1963. Lorry-driver David Back, driving up the west side of Shooters Hill, stopped to assist what he thought was an injured dog. As he approached, it got up and ran off into the woods. Whatever it was, it was not a dog, and had long legs and a long, pointed tail that curled up. It appeared to have a mouth full of food. Mr Back's report to the local police station sparked off a hunt which eventually included extra police from other stations, troops and sixth formers from the local grammar school.
A patrol car went into the woods and disturbed the animal, which 'jumped clean over the bonnet of the car'. The 'cheetah' was reported several times that night and early morning, but there are no further details. The 'Daily Mirror' of the 19th reported the animal to be golden in colour. The 'Evening News' of the same date states that there had been previous sightings, but we have been unable to locate any. All large animals in the area were accounted for.

On the south-eastern side of Shooters Hill, near Welling Way, the searchers found claw marks on a tree and, in the mud of a dried up stream,'a number of prints several inches across with the marks of claws clearly visible'.

2. ¾ of an hour before dawn, 23rd July, 1963. Johnson & Phillip's sports ground, Kidbrooke. Head groundsman Jim Green was awoken by loud snarling noises, starting near Kidbrooke Park Road, and moving along the course of the River Quaggy, a stream running behind bushes and trees along one side of the sports ground. A security sergeant from the nearby RAF

station also heard the snarls, and investigated with a constable. As dawn broke, they saw 'a big dark animal, between 18 and 24 inches high, silhouetted against a white cricket screen'. It walked off into the bushes. Five carloads of police arrived, by which time, naturally, the beast had disappeared.
Incidentally, streams leading to the Quaggy rise on the west side of Shooters Hill, where the animal was first seen.

UFOs.

We have been able to trace only one UFO report for this area, details of which may be found in NEWS 10/16. Briefly:

3. 8th Sept 74: a bright, sulphurous light seen over Plumstead Common at 11.25pm. It hovered, then shot off at great speed.

4. 9th Sept 74, mid-morning. The same, or a similar object was seen at Eltham, a fantastically bright glare, moving slowly.

GHOSTS

5. George Lane, Lewisham, SE13
(See NEWS 12/22) An invisible presence pays court to the ladies, while making the room uncomfortably cold for male guests.

6. Blackwall Tunnel, SE10.
The ghost of a young motorcyclist, who fell off his bike in the tunnel, in 1972 and was killed, has been seen on the Greenwich approach to the tunnel, complete with black leather gear, goggles and crash-helmet. (Kentish Times, 18 Dec 75).

7. Hare & Billet Rd, Blackheath, SE10.
A shadowy figure of a woman, dressed in dark Victorian clothes, has been seen on autumn eveinings in the mist. She is thought to be a married woman looking for her lover, who had arranged to meet and take her away. When he didn't show, she hung herself on one of the trees. Last seen in November 1971 (Andrew Green: Our Haunted Kingdom, Wolfe, 1973)
We note that, until the early years of this century, a convent stood near this site, the nuns being known locally as the 'Grey Ladies'...though whether this is relevant, we have no idea...

8. Catherine House, Blackheath Rd, SE10.
A woman, dressed in dark brown and carrying some keys, glides silently downstairs and into the butler's pantry (Greenwich Borough Council Local History Centre (LHC))

9. (?), Blackheath, SE3.
A woman at Blackheath saw a vision of her mongrel dog, at the same time as it died in Bath, according to Elliott O'Donnell: (Casebook of Ghosts, Foulsham, 1969) No date, no further details.

10. Blackheath Library, St John's Park, SE3.
The vicarage of nearby St John's church was converted into the library in 1956, since when library staff have reported feeling something invisible pushing past them, and lights go on after the library has shut. The ghost is believed to be that of Elsie Marshall, who was raised in the vicarage. In 1892, she went to China as a missionary, and on 1 Aug 1895 was murdered, with others, by a local secret society, the 'Vegetarians' (Chaichiao), near Foochow, Fukien. Her ghost is now supposed to have returned to her birthplace. (LHC).

11. Greenwich Park, SE10.
O'Donnell (ibid.) records seeing, 24 Jul 1898, what he describes as a 'nature spirit' here. Sitting on a bench beneath a giant, diseased elm, he saw fall from the tree 'a figure half-human and half-animal - stunted, bloated, pulpy and yellow. Crawling sideways like a crab, it made for a bush opposite, into which it disappeared'. Terrified, he fled. Like so many of O'Donnell's tales, it is of course impossible to confirm this story.

12. Queen's House, National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, SE10.
Here the Rev. R N Hardy took his famous photograph in 1966, showing a shrouded figure on the Tulip staircase. A figure, hooded and robed in monkish fashion, ascends the stairs, left hand on the bannister. Another hand clutches the rail a short distance ahead, but this also appears to be a left hand, and is too far ahead to be connected with the first figure, so it is assumed that the 'monk' is chasing someone. The second figure is obscured by the glare of an electric lamp on the wall nearby. No figures were visible to the naked eye. Full details of the photograph (lens-settings, etc) may be found in Peter Underwood: Haunted London, (Harrap, 1973) as well as the following: An investigation party spending the night there heard footsteps, but found no other evidence. A former warder found the doorway to the Tulip staircase 'uncomfortable and disturbing', and also saw an unexplained figure which vanished in the tunnel which runs beneath the collonade immediately outside the Queen's House. No historical legend attaches to this ghost.

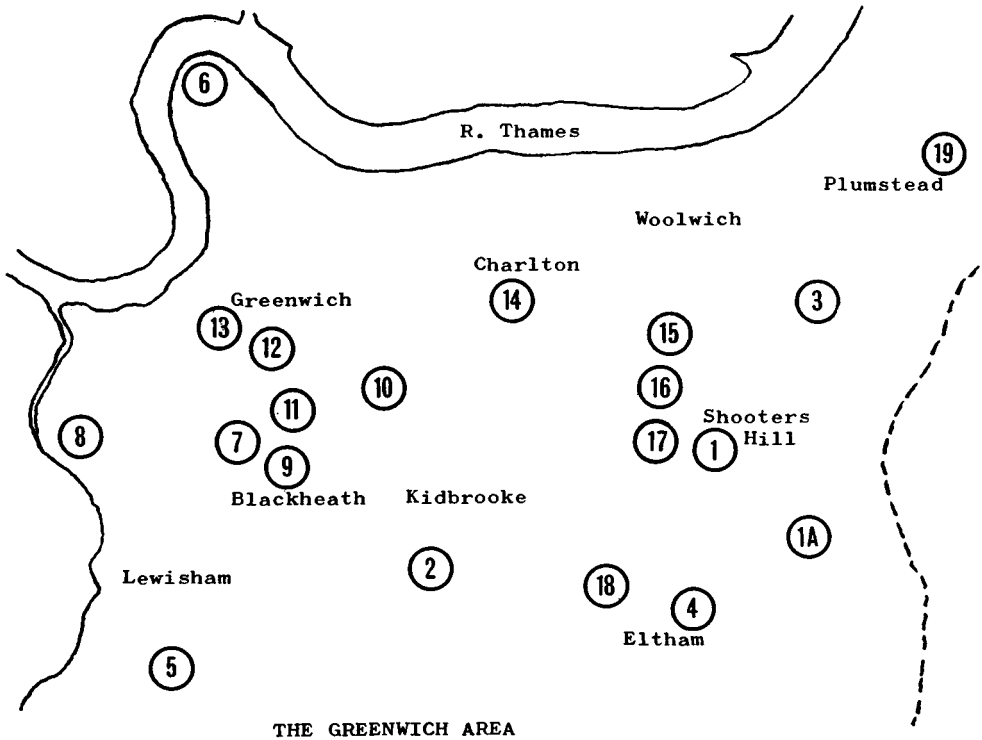
13. Staff College, Royal Naval College, Greenwich, SE10.
(Underwood, ibid.). Queen Anne block, 1 Jan 1962. Edward C Hull and a colleague were working when a door-handle jig-

gled, and was then violently thrown open. The door was closed again, and the event repeated a few seconds later. They then heard faint footsteps, followed by sounds resembling grit dropping, or very light taps. On discussion, they found they had both previously seen filmy figures, and also a shrouded figure in one room, which faded out when greeted. The ghost is thought to be Admiral Byng, who was imprisoned in the college prior to his execution for treason in 1757. Both this and the above building lie on the site of the medieval Greenwich Palace.

14. Charlton House, Charlton Village, SE7.
See (NEWS 12/22) for the standard version of this story, according to which the ghost of Sir William Langhorne attempts to rape female visitors in hope of getting an heir. The LHC records a more detailed but less romantic set of events: 'An old lady, still living in the village' says that when the house was being used as a military hospital in WW1, the then owner, Lady Wilson, warned nurses not to put injured men in what had been her bedroom. The warning was ignored, and some soldiers reported seeing a ghost. Both Mr Barker, the warden, and his predesessor, Mr Jenkins, have had reports from overnight guests of a presence in their bedroom. Mr Jenkins' dog was obviously disturbed whenever it passed a certain spot on the first landing of the staircase, and Mr Barker frequently felt a chill at the same spot. Sir William Langhorne died, aged 85, in 1714, without issue, having married twice. There is no evidence that he was particularly perturbed at being the last of his line. One letter in the LHC file asserts that this tradition is less than five years old, and was constructed on the basis of the above events (and, we suspect, from the name Langhorne!). Another letter states, however, that it is a strong local tradition.

15. No 33 Woolwich Common, SE18.
This house has since been demolished. In 1971, the owner personally reported to the LHC that she had seen the ghost of a Victorian nurse or nursemaid bending over her young daughter.

16. Academy Road, Woolwich Common, SE18.
We are told that a letter to the Kentish Independent, probably some time in the early 1970s, mentioned a troop of soldiers in WW1 uniform seen marching along the road, which leads from the Royal Artillery barracks, at about that date. With



THE GREENWICH AREA
With aprox. locations of events

such a vague reference, it has been impractical to track down the original letter so far.

17. Shooters Hill Rd / Well Hall Rd, SE18
This crossroads at the foot of Shooters Hill is reputed to be haunted by a 'White Lady'. According to Eric Maple, quoted in (Kentish Independent, 27 June, 74), the ghost is probably the spirit of a suicide case, who would traditionally have been buried at a crossroad with an iron stake through her heart. However, we have found the original newspaper report (unreferenced) to the discovery of the body, and there is no evidence of suicide or an iron stake. The body was some 30 yards from the crossroads, and was treated as an unidentified murder victim. O'Donnell (ibid.) gives the story, apart from getting the date wrong by a mere 6 months...June 10th, 1844, a labourer unearthed the skeleton of a woman with the back of her skull badly fractured, indicating foul play. Much long, golden hair was still attached to the skull, indicating that the body was not too old. Prior to this, in the 1830s, it seems that people passing by had heard unaccountable noises and seen the phantom of a woman in a white dress gliding along. The remains were interred in a nearby churchyard, and her identity never discovered. Apparently the ghost appeared a number of times later in the 19th century, usually preceded by a cry of terror and despair. We have found no 20th century cases.

18. Kidbrooke Lane, Well Hall, SE9.
O'Donnell (ibid) gives a curious parallel case, about a mile distant from the above. On 25 April, 1871, Jane Maria Clousen was murdered here, struck on the head with a hammer. The man accused of the murder, Edmund Pook, produced an alibi, and the case remained unsolved. After the murder it was claimed that the lane was haunted nightly by cries and groans, and the apparition of the murdered girl. The place got such a bad reputation that it was shunned after dark. The LHC crime file contains no record of the murder, nor have we found any evidence to corroborate O'Donnell's story.

19. Barnfield Gardens, Plumstead, SE18.
(NEWS 2/8) for details. A pre-war council flat was haunted by a white-haired old man with a goatee beard. Lights were switched off and on, and something cold brushed past the occupants.

20. Tavy Bridge, Thamesmead, SE28.
Strictly, this case falls a mile or two outside our area, but we include it as it has only recently come to our attention.

The story, according to the Kentish Independent, 11 Dec 75, is that when excavations for the 'new town' of Thamesmead were being carried out, a complete WW2 fighter plane was discovered buried in the marshes, but with no pilot. He, in sergeant pilot's uniform, and nicknamed Joseph, is said to haunt several premises near Tavy Bridge, especially the butcher's shop which stands over the site of the plane's grave. The former owner claimed to have seen and spoken with the ghost, the current owner only claims to have felt a presence late at night and to have heard footsteps. The ubiquitous Eric Maple is quoted as saying that local residents have told him that, ever since the plane came down, there have been sounds of a phantom aircraft, with engine trouble.
The Kentish Times, 18 Dec 75, has a different story. First, the pilot was found strapped in the aircraft, and is seen outside the shops. Their reporter then did some research, consulting the GLC. No plane had ever been found, but the council's spokesman had heard a story of a WW1 plane crashing there. The Ministry of defence could throw no light on the matter, suggesting searches of the Imperial War Museum and the Public Records office...but both institutions said it would take two days research to check out. The reporter gave up...looking back at the whole mess, he has our sympathy...

THE GREAT 'ICE-STORM'.

Drawn from Kentish Mercury & Kentish Independent, both 24 July, 1925.
21. 22nd July, 1925. This storm appears to have covered most of the eastern half of our area, including Eltham, Shooters Hill, Woolwich and Plumstead, before moving away eastwards into Kent, dying out around Bexleyheath and Erith.
The afternoon was the hottest for 2 years, reaching 90 degrees, though it was sultry with no strong sunshine. Thunder started rumbling about 5.00pm, and at 6.00 the storm broke. There was considerable flooding, with water running in torrents through the streets, and buses and fire engines grinding to a halt when they ran into deep water. Lightning struck trees and set off fire-alarms. But worst of all was the ice...
The hailstones started quite small, but soon reached the size of eggs, then, among the smooth round ones, jagged fragments started to fall, and some 4 or 5 inches long were picked up. Some had sharp, jagged edges. Lawns were turned white. There was terror in upper Plumstead, as a 'tornado-like wind' hurled down showers of ice for up to ten minutes. 'For several minutes, there was one long succession of crashing glass, windows were driven in, and huge pellets

carried far into rooms.' Birds on Plumstead common, knocked out of their trees, were killed and injured. Cows and horses ran about in panic in the fields. People running for cover were cut by flying ice and some even had their clothing cut 'as by jagged knives'.
A hailstone picked up at Abbey Wood weighed 10½ oz. At Woolwich, a fragment weighed over a pound. Ice weighing up to 8 oz was picked up at Eltham, and Belvedere, where it made a hole in the roof of the Conservative Club, and another made a six-inch hole in the roof of the Salvation Army hall. Although these are the exceptionally large falls, ice seems to have showered over the entire area in ungodly large lumps...
After this short and exceedingly fierce display, the storm subsided, but returned later and continued until nearly midnight...but this time without ice.

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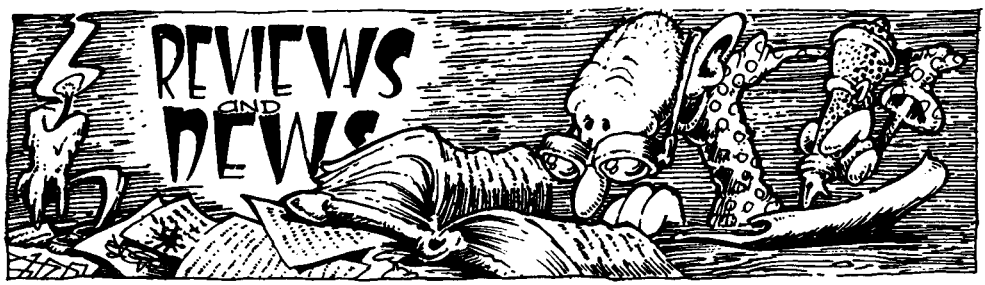
I would like, briefly, to pay tribute to the charming ladies at the G.B.C. Local History Centre, who smilingly put up with my idiotic impositions while preparing this uncouth offering. Their assistance has provided many more items than those actually credited to them. Thank you and goodnight.

Steev Moore -- Jan 1976.



The formation of the Institute of Geomantic Research recently, to co-ordinate and publish original research on landscape geometry; leys and figures, etc; terrestrial zodiacs; geodesic studies (dowsing, etc); sacred geometry and ancient metrology; and legendary geometry; was announced quietly. Membership costs £2.50 annually, including a journal and occasional papers, the first of which,'Landscape Geometry of Southern Britain' by Michael Behrend, costs 35p plus p&p (free to members). More details from and applications to: IGR, 142 Pheasant Rise, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8SD, England.

Chile says an emphatic 'No!' to suggested Rolling Stones retirement concert on Easter Island -- Sunday Times, 14 Dec 75.

The Arts Council exhibition of 'Peruvian Ground Drawings', featuring the tireless work and photos of Maria Reich on the Nazca plateau, will be at the ICA gallery, London, from 9 April - 2 May; after which it will travel around England (we'll publish the itinerary next ish). A catalogue will be available at £4 - an essential reference volume on these ancient boggling patterns.

We learn from Anthony Roberts that Dr Glyn Daniel will address a meeting on the "lighter" side of archeology, held at Cambridge University under the auspices of the Philosophical Society, and promises to "deal" with cranks, forgers and the lunatic fringe in the subject. As Tony writes: "Being one of the most pompous of the orthodox cranks he is well qualified to pontificate on such subjects. His infamous eating tours of France with a little tepid archeology on the side were a great joke amongst his more bright students. The IGR (see above item) will be bringing out a leaflet for the meeting pointing out some of his own amusing cock-ups, like Piltdown Man, the Glozel Carvings and the ley-line fiasco in the Ley Hunter (TLH 14 and earlier). We hope that members who can will attend in force and give Dr Daniel the sort of reception he so richly deserves." This meeting, entitled "Fable, Fraud, Forgeries & Archeologists", will be held at 5pm on the 9th Feb. All Forteans are invited to add their raspberries to this deserving cause.

We also heard that a lecture series called 'In search of Ancient Astronomies' will be hosted by the University of California at Los Angeles (Dept. Bio & Physical Sciences). Among the many topics of Archeoastronomy, which begin on 15th Jan, we see that EC Krupp will deal with much the same sort of subjects as Dr Daniel, on 4th March, in a talk entitled 'Observatories of the Gods & other Astronomical Fantasies'. I wonder how they will compare?

REVIEWS:REVIEWS:REVIEWS:REWIEVS:REIWVSE:REVIE

This issue has become a bit short on space and we shall have to carry over the stack of booknews, reviews and mentions to next issue.

Did You See...?

'The Fleet-footed Dinosaurs' Bryan Silcock waxing warms on Adrian J Desmond's book The Hot-blooded Dinosaurs (Blond & Briggs, £5.95) Good pictures of cute monsters "gettin' it on". Sunday Times Magazine, 30 Nov 75. In the same paper for 9 Dec 75, Dr Beverley Halstead challenges Desmond's views. (We met both gents in this issue locking horns over Nessie).

The Ghost Hunters, an extremely shallow documentary by Hugh Burnett on BBC 1 (TV), 4 Dec 75, in which (it is admitted) he gives people enough rope to hang themselves. Sets scepticism back a 100 years. Contrary to expectations, Dr Chris Evans' two documentaries Into the Unknown, ITV 2 & 9 Dec 75, were models of restraint: the first being a quick resume of a number of areas of paranormal experience; the second a look at current research. Evans surprised me by admitting that the "scientific approach has failed to deliver the goods". It is not a phenomenon that can be quantified on demand, and therefore sad to see thousands of dollars propping up wholly materialistic gadget-orientated approaches.

New Scientist: 20 Nov: 'The 7 Elementary Catastrophies' by Dr Ian Stewart on the revolutionary mathematical theories of Rene Thom -- 4 Dec: 'Science detects the Forgeries' by Dr Stuart Fleming; 'Metals that can be like glass' by Dick Taylor -- 27 Nov: 'What's so special about Man's Brain?' by Dr R Passingham; 'Did the Anaerobes defeat the Dinosaurs?' suggestive evidence on the old mystery of why the dinosaurs disappeared 64 million years ago -- 11 Dec: Another blow to the claims for gravity waves as an experiment at Reading U., Berks., fails to detect any -- 18 Dec: 'What happened to the Universe before the Big Bang?' ; 'Time & Lysenko's unsung Critic' by Daniil Granin; and Dr P Chadwick investigating why geologists are only just beginning to report certain strata-patterns, when they were there all the time, is it a psychological problem? -- 1 Jan 76: 'The Brain's own Opiate' Dr R Lewin -- 8 Jan: 'Black Holes are hot' in which Dr G Gibbons finds BHs radiating heat; 'Ice Age is writ in the Canadian Snows' asks why we are not already 200yrs into the next Ice Age?

Psychic Eye No1, Dec 75; 35p -- a rather gushy new mag with a panting approach to the whole range of media-occult subjects. Only items worth mentioning are: an extract of Colin Wilson's forthcoming sequel to his best-selling 'The Occult', being a chapter on the 'Ghosts, ghouls & pendulums of Tom Lethbridge' (also met in this issue); and an uncredited article 'UFOs from Atlantis' which doesn't tell you anything you don't already know if you've been keeping up with your reading.

Fate, Dec 75: Curtis Fuller on some pix from Ted Serios of Patricia Hearst before her recent capture; 'Thunder of the Mackimoodus': HV Brooke on the strange aerial detonations of the East Haddam area of Connecticut, also mentioned by Fort. Jan 76: 'The Merveilleux Veilleux' in which Jule Eisenbud finds two brothers able to think images onto sealed film; David Henry looks at Wegener's theory of continental drift and concludes 'No Room for Atlantis'.

Flying Saucer Review, V21 Nos 3&4 (double issue). Amongst the usual interesting material are: Dr Leo Sprinkle with a preliminary report on the Colorado UFO kidnap of Carl Higdon; Dr Berthold Schwarz on yet another thoughtographist (see Fate above), this time a lady who experienced a UFO landing; Wido Hovill on a UFO EM-effect that stopped Army manoevres in Wales; Poher & Vallée on 'Basic Patterns in UFO Observations'; Gordon Creighton on a UFO that shone a light, turning a car transparent; 3 cases involving 'humanoids' and lots more. After a long delay, I hope FSR gets back on schedule again.

MUFOB, New Series No1 — We heartily welcome the return of MUFOB, which consistently prints sound and original UFO-oriented papers. This issue contains Peter Rogerson on the historical continuity of 'The Phantom Ship & The UFO'. More details from John Rimmer (Ed): 11 Beverley Rd, New Malden, Surrey KT3 4AW.

The Ley Hunter, 67.— 'It ain't no coincidence', Robin Holtom on synchronicity; Pt2 of 'Forgotten Heart of Albion' by P Devereux & A York; 'Survey of Saxon Church at Bradford-on-Avon & Alignments' by Janet Roberts — 68: Jimmy Goddard on 'Ley Hunting in Wales'; Andrew Larman on John Cooper Powys, Britain & the Golden Age'; Pt 3 of the Devereux & York 'Forgotten Heart of Albion'. TLH: 5 Egton Drive, Seaton Carew, Hartlepool, Cleveland TS25 2AT.

Lantern, Winter 75 — Nigel Pennick on 'The Puddingstones at Coton'; Ron Hill concluding his study of 'Bio-rhythyms & Psi'; a 'Mystery Aeroplane' case of Aug 75; investigations into 'Ghosts at Westwood House'; a Lowestoft UFO case of 3 Dec 62; and the 'Mummified Cats' of Sudbury, Suffolk; plus a review of BSIG's first 5 years (Congratulations). BSIG: 3 Dunwich Way, Lowestoft, Suffolk NR32 4RZ.

Pursuit, Oct 75 -- Report on the 'Strange World' exhibit at 'Man & His World' (formerly Expo 67) Montreal; Tim Church on 'The Flathead Lake Monster'; Robert E Jones on an unusual ape, and 'Bigfoot in New Jersey'; Ron Dobbins explains the '"Fishfalls" of Yoro, Honduras'; 'Octopus Giganteus Verrill' the paper that Gary Mangiacopra was scheduled to give at Fortfest 75 and prevented by mis-

fortune; 'The Dodecated Globe' by William H Whammond, being an exploration of Sanderson's idea of 'Vile Vortices'. Pursuit is the Journal of the Society for the Investigation of the Unexplained, SITU: Columbia, New Jersey 07832.

'Did You See' is compiled from notes sent in by readers. We need someone who regularly reads Nature, Science, Scientific American, Procedings of the Royal Society, etc (not necessarily all the same person) who drop us a line every 2 months on anything interesting. Any volunteers please contact the editor. Thanks.

Asia Minor MAs, cont...

night onto the terraces, abducted children from their beds and went off before any could oppose them." The story continues in this vein; the countryside becoming bare of cattle and men afraid to travel, even in groups of 2 or 3. Eventually, "...These monsters passed into Arzanene (Armenia's southern border with Assyria) and badly ravaged every village, as well as the country of Maipherk, and on Mount Cahai, and they caused damage at Amida (Upper Tigris)."

Robert JM Rickard -- Jan 1976.

EDITORIAL cont...

in the quality of photo reproduction. We simply cannot afford to screen our photos for good repro. The next cheapest format would be a judicious combination of stencil-duplicated pages with a few litho ones for illos. The price would be heavy in terms of extra editorial time in preparation, not to mention the added burden of manual collation and stapling. We'd also have to change to the larger A4 format. Personally, I'd be very reluctant to change our format, unless it was for the better - ie typesetting, or more pages. But this is as much your mag as it is mine - after all, you pay for it - and so I'd like your help and advice in this difficult time. Please let me know how you feel.

I want us to grow - and you can help. We need money. I'm not sure even, God help me, how we stand in law about this. But we need money, for sure, either from more subs, the kindness and support of donations, or (indefinite) loans against our future. So if you've been waiting for the call to arms -- HEEEEEELLLPPP!!!!

NEW PRICES

Due to the disgraceful slide of the pound, it has become necessary to re-evaluate the rates of INFO and THE NEWS at the internationally more equitable rate of $2 to £1. This means that all overseas prices become slightly more expensive to us in England - and English prices cheaper to foreigners. These new prices can be found in our colophon and on the address sheet, and will be valid from 1st Jan 76 onward. All current subscriptions will be honoured. If you feel you've lost out, sorry, but it really has hurt us more than it hurt you - better take it up with your governments, since they got us into this mess.

BACK ISSUES

Due to lack of capital, we can't print a huge stock of NEWSs; Nos 1-4 are gone, and, as is sensible with a dwindling resource in our state of poverty, we must ask 50p for each back copy in print (ie Nos 5 to date). We have a price of 60p/$1.20 per copy for a Xerox facsimile of Nos 1-4. Since this is a bulk price, we need to make up batches of ten. So please write if you want them.

Backnumbers of INFO Journal are also available, and at a reduced price, to create some free space outside Paul Willis' bathroom. Nos 1,2 & 8 are OP. Nos 3,5-7,9 &10 will cost 75$/38p. Nos 4 (in short supply), 11-13 will cost $1/50p. No14 (inshort supply) will cost $1.50/75p. UK orders to THE NEWS -- USA & overseas orders to INFO: Box 367, Arlington, VA 22210, USA.

GET ON THE FORTIBUS

INFO now has a large stock of The Complete Books of Charles Fort, recently reprinted by Dover, keeping the same pagination as the 1940 Holt/Fortean Society edition. It consists of the four books (Book of the Damned; New Lands; Lo!; Wild Talents) in 1125 pages, with the old (but limited) index. Costing $15.00/£7.50, postage included, from the INFO address above.

A SPECIAL 'NEWS' BINDER

We've looked at the idea of a special binder for THE NEWS. How'd you like a good-looking black 3-ring cover, with a silver NEWS design? At €2.00/$4.00 at time (inc. postage) we can have one that holds 2yrs copies of the NEWS & indexes. To save punching holes in your copies, it will come with the right number of strong stick-on strips, punched to fit the 3-ring binder. Once again, because of lack of capital, we have to get your orders first, since the minimum quantity we can order is 100. The price, which includes VAT paid, is not bad for keeping 2yrs issues in good condition.

INDEX 1975 & SOME GOOD NEWS

The 1975 index will be delayed till later this year because of pressure of urgent work. You know, I still get letters thinking I have a staff to do all this, but I don't. Most regrettably, I have to use some time and energy in the business of staying alive. However, one of the most pleasant projects under way is a book on Fortean phenomena, commissioned by Thames & Hudson from your editor and John Michell. We'll keep you posted.